

(1975)

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RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROHNERT PARK
APPROVING AN ADDENDUM TO THE GENERAL PLAN BY INCLUDING
A SCENIC HIGHWAY ELEMENT AND A SAFETY ELEMENT

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WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Rohnert Park did hold duly noticed public hearings on a proposed Scenic Highway Element and a Safety Element as proposed addendums to the City's General Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission did recommend the adoption of said elements, as drafted by the City's Planning Department, and

WHEREAS, state law requires that all General Plans have a Scenic Highway Element and a Safety Element incorporated in the Plan by June 30, 1975, and

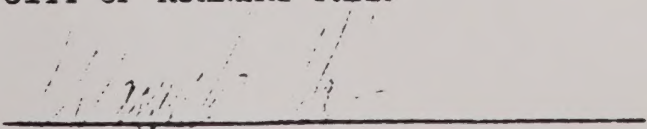
WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Rohnert Park did, on the 21st day of April, 1975, conduct a duly noticed public hearing to consider the recommendation of the Planning Commission concerning the inclusion of the proposed Scenic Highway Element and the Safety Element as addendums to the City's General Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Council finds and determines that the proposed Scenic Highway Element and the Safety Element are both consistent with state law and it would be in the best interests of the public safety, health, and welfare that they be incorporated into the City's General Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Rohnert Park that it does hereby approve and adopt, as addendums to the Rohnert Park General Plan, the Scenic Highway Element and the Safety Element, copies of which are attached hereto and by reference made a part of this resolution.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED this 21st day of April, 1975.

CITY OF ROHNERT PARK


Mayor

IV - SCENIC HIGHWAY ELEMENT

Scenic highways and roadways have potential for meeting recreational needs, providing visual relief, guiding pedestrians and motorists alike through the city scape; providing the spine of an urban design concept that brings organization into the landscape and creates visual orientation to one's surroundings. Protection of scenic highways and roads requires attendant protection of land uses; control of unsightly utility lines and signs; correction and management of plant materials; control over earth work and construction activity; maintenance of private property as well as city owned properties along the corridors and design of street furniture and graphic coordination are important to the success of a scenic highway program. There is an inter-relationship between conservation, open space and scenic highways that cannot be overlooked.

In essence then, scenic highways and roads, as well as trails and walkways are considered essential to the success of the city's open space, conservation and recreation elements of the General Plan. Together these elements should form a system or network, contributing to the success of environmental quality or maintenance.

Selection Criteria:

- A. Quality of visual experience either existing now or potentially available.
- B. Continuity of the experience that the observer would have.
- C. Opportunity for connection of activity nodes within the city i.e. shopping centers.
- D. Minimizing conflicts with alternate forms of transportation and routes.
- E. Maximizing public facilities and utility rights-of-way.
- F. Opportunity of meeting community needs or desires.

Rohnert Park Scenic Highways

The routes as they apply to the Rohnert Park General Plan as scenic routes and which shall be declared eligible for official scenic highway designation are: U.S. 101 Freeway, from the City of Cotati to the Wilfred Avenue Overpass; Golf Course Drive, from Commerce Blvd. to Snyder Lane; Rohnert Park Expressway from Commerce Boulevard to Petaluma Hill Road; Snyder Lane, from the city limits on the north to East Cotati Avenue; on the south; Petaluma Hill Road, from Crane Canyon Road to Railroad Avenue.

- A. U.S. 101 Freeway, from the City of Cotati to the Wilfred Avenue overpass is the major gateway to the city. Most of the existing and proposed development along this route is general commercial and industrial.
- B. Golf Course Drive, from Commerce Blvd. to Snyder Lane offers a view of the northern portion of the City and the golf course.
- C. Rohnert Park Expressway, from Commerce Blvd. to Petaluma Hill Road is the major gateway into the city and Sonoma State College.

D. Snyder Lane, from the city limits on the north to East Cotati Avenue is an urban scenic road as well as a rural scenic road and offers a view of the Sonoma Mountains.

E. Petaluma Hill Road, from Crane Canyon Road to Railroad Avenue borders the foothills with a spectacular view of the valley and mountains.

The proposed scenic routes are both major urban and rural roads which traverse both heavily and sparsely populated areas. These routes possess the basic quality of scenic routes such as:

A. Quality in scenic, natural and/or recreation interest.

B. Variety of terrain and landscape.

C. Adequate design and safety.

D. Accessibility between public recreation; parks and points of scenic interest.

E. Compatibility with open space objectives such as conservation of open space, outdoor recreation, etc.

Under the State Scenic Highway Program, it is possible to have county roads, other than state highways, designated as "county scenic highways" by the State Director of Public Works. Thus, Snyder Lane and Petaluma Hill Road are eligible for "official county scenic highway" designation. All procedures prescribed for state scenic highways apply equally to those county scenic highways, except that local government is responsible for preparing the scenic highway corridor survey and highway facility study in addition to developing the corridor protection and implementation program.

Those policies established for scenic routes are:

A. Designation of scenic highways shall be in conformance with the General Plan policies and supplement the land use and circulation elements.

B. Scenic corridors adjacent to scenic highways shall include, generally, the area visible from the route.

C. Land uses non-compatible to the overall scenic beauty shall be screened.

D. Standards for development of scenic routes and adjacent scenic areas shall be established and adhered to by local jurisdictions.

E. Attention shall be given to the visual qualities within the scenic corridors by controlling development through legislation.

Standards must be established for development of scenic routes and adjacent scenic areas. These standards shall dictate the type, amount, and extent of allowable land uses. Control of development shall be accomplished through local government regulatory power.

Scenic Highway Development

Components to be considered in scenic route development may include one or all of the following.

alternatives

is

best points

arks

residential, and/or tourist oriented commercial development.

al sites

recreation

ve landscaping

aping and pathways along all drainage channels

sition of open space and scenic corridors

ethods

ing ordinance

tion of a scenic route of scenic corridor zone

ontrol of uses, setbacks, densities, etc.

ion Regulations

mitation of cut and fill

ree preservation and planting

ing Code

Housing code

Fire prevention

Litter control

weed and insect control

Water pollution control

Forestry practice (where applicable)

entation

to be taken for implementation of the Scenic Highway Element and the
tion, conservation and enhancement of scenic highways:

tain coordination between city, county, and state levels of government
concerning scenic highway program.

Approved and application of legislation for control over development
in all units.

- C. Preparation to the state for inclusion of designated scenic highway routes in the State Master Plan for "scenic highways" for designation as "official county scenic highway."

By inclusion of the Scenic Highway Element within the Rohnert Park General Plan, the policy to enhance the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the community, promote a favorable image to those travelers along the scenic routes, spur community pride, and generally to enhance the economic opportunity of the business community through tourism. Official designation of the scenic highways identified in the General Plan will begin to provide for the protection and enhancement of the natural scenic environment for the present and future use of residents and visitors alike.



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Introduction:

The State Legislature has included as a mandatory element of the General Plan the "Safety Element." The purpose and intent of this element is to provide for a safe environment for the populace and to mitigate man-made and geologic hazards.

Goal:

To provide an environment that is reasonably safe from unexpected disasters which will permit the citizens of Rohnert Park to conduct their daily lives free from fear and apprehension.

Objectives:

- A. Reduce the potential of ravaging fires on undeveloped land covered with flammable material.
- B. Install an adequate water distribution system and storage facilities within the city to assure adequate pressure and delivery of water for fire suppression.
- C. Eliminate the possibilities of fire at their source.
- D. Reduce the possibilities of land slides, flooding and other geological hazards.
- E. Provide fast, efficient, and reliable assistance in the suppression of disaster producing incidents, by providing assistance to the victims and the evacuation of areas of people and goods where conditions are warranted

Sources of Hazardous Conditions:

The General Plan for a community primarily addresses itself to land uses, with a circulation system and community facilities to service them. Inherent in the land use plan is the necessity to avoid urban uses of land which are hazardous or where conditions exist which could conceivably become hazardous by the introduction of urbanization without a concurrent recognition of the need for special improvements to reduce the possibility of a disaster. Within a community, there are a number of sources which constitute a variety of hazardous conditions including:

Vacant Vegetated Lands - Practically all of the vacant lands in the Rohnert Park planning area are covered by hay and grasses. Summer temperatures exceed 80 degrees for a sustained period of time while prevailing summer winds range from four to fifteen miles per hour from the west. Continuous drying heat and the absence of moisture develop a fire hazard which, if uncontrolled or in the absence of adequate protective forces, could cause large losses of property and lives.

Geological - Hazardous lands are not particularly present in the Rohnert Park area. This subject is adequately covered in the Seismic Safety Element of the General Plan. However, in the foothills, east of the City immediate response to fire is made difficult except where the roads are immediately accessible to a fire. The terrain makes it difficult to loop any water system. This area, because of its hazard is either identified as open space or outside the planning area.

On-site flooding can occur on a vacant land within the city because of the existing flat configuration and grass coverage restricts the overland flow of storm runoff, causing on-site ponding to occur during extended periods of rainfall. After the topsoils have been saturated by peak storms, the gentle slope on some of the lands direct the drainage into the flood control channels, in other areas the road beds act as levees holding the water until the storms subside.

The continuation of development in Rohnert Park may tend to carry more runoff out of the area, providing less opportunity for the infiltration of rain water to the underlying water table. The city relies heavily upon these underground reservoirs for its domestic water system. The cumulative impact from all development proposals in the Rohnert Park-Cotati area may in time cause an adverse impact on the City's well system from the lack of rain water infiltration. The State of California, Dept. of Water Resource, under an agreement with the City of Rohnert Park, is in the process of doing an indepth study on the water basin, in order to ascertain where the water comes from; the amount of water and the effect of urbanization on the water table,

Water Supply - The most effective tool for the fire is water and the ability to deliver it to the base of the control of fire. Consequently, it is necessary to have a comprehensive system of adequate sized water mains to all areas of development. This system should have sufficient capacity to handle fire flow demands for extended lengths of time.

Circulation System - The location, extent and capacity of the local street system will determine the capacity of emergency services and the evacuation potentation of the overall community. In the Circulation Element of the General Plan this subject is adequately covered. It becomes readily apparent that adequate streets are necessary for the delivery of emergency equipment and manpower to the site of a fire or disaster. Similarly, the same system is necessary to evacuate people when conditions warrant such action.

Existing Structures - Older structures in the community should be periodically checked to conform with the present building codes. These structures should have the safety wiring; fire blocking and certain flammable interiors and heating systems checked so as not to constitute a potential fire hazard which could spread unless sufficient men and equipment and water are available.

Existing Activities - Water supply, although the city's supply of ground water is an excellent natural resource which is presently available at a lower cost than water from the Sonoma County Water Agency, care should be taken to minimize the possible adverse effect of urbanization on the rate of recharge of the valuable resource so as to have adequate water to meet domestic as well as fire flow requirements within the city.

Fire Prevention - Within the city, property owners are required to comply with regulations concerning the Uniform Building Code, Housing Code and Fire Code. In addition, all land owners are subject to reducing the potential fire hazard on their property through removal or other activities which will eliminate the flammable vegetation. This program is mandatory and can be implemented by the city through the use of tax liens for work performed by the city or contract crews.

The creation of fire breaks and the elimination of flammable material reduces the potential for a disaster caused by fire.

The Department of Public Safety will, on a voluntary basis, inspect private residences to point out any methods of correcting potential fire hazards to private property owners.

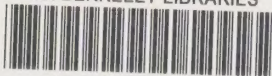
Fire Suppression - The present allocation of fire personnel and the location of the existing as well as the distribution of future stations adequately cover the City. The existing equipment is for the most part new and up to date and can handle most situations that will arise.

Contingency Plan - The City of Rohnert Park has prepared and adopted an emergency plan dated June 1971 and updated May 1974. This plan is multi-purpose in that it can be placed into operation for any emergency that may arise. It is coordinated with the Sonoma County Office of Emergency Services and meets the objectives and directives of the State Disaster Office and regulations and plans adopted by the State of California.

Recommendations

- A. Continue and expand the control of flammable growing material in open lands of the community. Encourage the use of the program in the unincorporated areas adjacent to the city.
- B. Continue to improve the water system and capacity for delivering water to all areas of the city in amounts necessary to control fires.
- C. Continue to improve the equipment renewal program so that adequate and operation equipment is always available.
- D. Implement a contingency plan that requires a constant series of tests and the maintenance of personnel registries, inventory of supplies, sources of equipment and an awareness by the individuals involved.
- E. Require all new subdivisions and developments to establish permanent fire breaks around its perimeters.
- F. Require all developments to install a looped water system and hydrants.
- G. Continue a strict code enforcement program to eliminate existing hazards and prevent additional hazards in the future.
- H. The City Engineer should continue the review of all tentative maps and development plans to reduce the possibility of on-site flooding that could occur from under designing of drainage systems.

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